

## ***Lobelia kalmii* L.**

Kalm's lobelia  
Campanulaceae (Harebell Family)

**Status:** State Endangered

**Rank:** G5S1

**General Description:** Perennial herb with stems that are sometimes branched, 4-16 inches in length. The 4-15 narrow cauline leaves ( $3/8$  to 2 inches long and  $1/16$  to  $1/4$  inch wide) are borne on the stem. The flowers occur in a terminal raceme and are mostly blue with a white or white and yellow eye, or are sometimes entirely white ( $1/4$  to  $1/2$  inch long).

**Identification Tips:** *L. kalmii* is most similar to *L. dortmanna*, from which it may be distinguished by the presence of cauline leaves and the fact that it can occur where there is little or no standing, open water. The genus *Lobelia* can be distinguished from *Downingia* by the former having pedicellate flowers.

**Phenology:** Flowers in late summer, beginning in late July and continuing through August.

**Range:** Newfoundland to Pennsylvania, west to British Columbia, and Colorado to Hudson Bay and the southern Mackenzie District. In WA, it occurs in Yakima County in the Columbia Basin physiographic province.

**Habitat:** Marl or peat bogs, along shores and in other wet places. In Washington, the plant is located in a perennial spring in an area that is otherwise dry in the big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass association of Daubenmire (1970). The vegetation consists of a tangled mat of herbs, including forbs and graminoid species. Shrubs occur intermittently in the area, primarily along creeks running through the site. The species diversity of the site is very high. There are several other species rare in WA that are present, including giant helleborine (*Epipactis gigantea*), porcupine sedge (*Carex hystericina*), beaked spike-rush (*Eleocharis rostellata*), and shining flatsedge (*Cyperus bipartitus*). Other associated species include cutleaf waterparsnip (*Berula erecta*), wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), marsh violet (*Viola palustris*), western St. John's wort (*Hypericum formosum*), showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), and cinquefoil (*Potentilla* sp.).

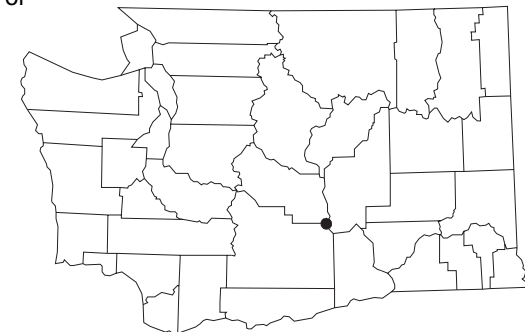
## ***Lobelia kalmii***

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Known distribution of  
*Lobelia kalmii*  
in Washington



● Current (1980+)  
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Debra Salstrom

Habitat photo not available

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**Ecology:** This species can apparently occur in a wide range of wetland types, including sphagnum bogs, stream and lake shores, wet meadows, and seeps and springs. The extant site in Yakima County probably had historical significance for wildlife because of the large spring in an otherwise arid region. The site has been degraded from past livestock use.

**State Status Comments:** The species is disjunct in Washington, known from one extant site in Yakima County. In addition there is one vague historical reference to an occurrence in the northeastern portion of the state that has not been relocated.

**Inventory Needs:** Appropriate habitats (bogs, springs, etc.) are somewhat limited and those in the drier portions of the state are difficult to gain access to due to land ownership patterns and lack of open roads. However, they should be inventoried for the species.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** Past livestock use of the one known site has significantly degraded it; the site has numerous weedy species. The sustainability of the habitat is dependent upon the steady flow of the natural spring.

### **References:**

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1959. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 4: Ericaceae through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 510 pp.

Parish, R., R. Coupe and D. Lloyd. 1996. *Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia*. B.C. Ministry of Forests. Lone Pine Publishing. Vancouver, B.C. 463 pp.